

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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The Polish Liquidation Commission Emergency Postal Issue*

by Vincent Domanski, Jr.

Immediately after the Armistice of the First World War, at the ancient capital of Cracow, District of Galicia, Mala Polska, in Southern Poland, a provisional government was set up. It was the Komisja Rządząca, otherwise Polska Komisja Likwidacyjna (in English, "Polish Liquidation Commission") and generally referred to as the "P. K. L."

This commission had many important duties, working in conjunction with the provisional government at Warsaw. The most important one was that of re-establishing and putting into order the Postal system left in a chaotic state by the Austrians. While awaiting the promised authorized issue of a definite series of stamps printed for this part of Poland, in the currency of halerzy and kronen, the limited supply of provisional Austrian stamps overprinted and surcharged was getting smaller daily. The commission, unable to await any longer, was authorized on the 5th of February, 1919, by the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs, at Warsaw to issue its own stamps.

A set of eleven stamps was issued. The design consisted of a crowned Polish white eagle within a shield; at the top over the shield was the inscription in large letters "POCZTA POLSKA" and on the bottom of the shield in each corner, the denomina-

tion and name of the currency designated between. These stamps were lithographed at the Printing Works of Zielinski, in Cracow. Issued in sheets of 100 stamps — ten stamps across and ten down, sheets of 50 stamps — five across and five down. Seven different values, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 15 and 20 halerzy, were lithographed on a thick soft and porous gray wove paper, made from the paper from the mills at Trzebinia; and the remainder of the issue, four values, denominations 25, 50 and 70 halerzy and the one kronen, on thin, smooth wove paper with a somewhat bluish tint, from the paper mills at Zywiec.

They were all issued imperforate and ungummed. At the various Post Offices pots of glue were supplied, and as the qualities of this glue varied, the colors and papers were greatly affected and many times resulted in the stamps being destroyed. Some commercial firms with large correspondence were permitted by authority of the Commission to perforate these stamps. This was done at Zywiec, Jaslo, Lezajsk, Krakow, and Trzebinia and such stamps are perforated with sewing machines, or rouletted and perforated gauged 11 and 11½, rough and clean cut.

The series comprise the following:

Two Halerzy: Gray and bluish gray.
(Scott's #61) Varieties: Top of right wing of eagle touches neck. Spear

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Bottom half of sheet printed with 50 stamps, five across and ten down.

point into right side top head. Broken number 2. Bottom frame line broken. Total issued 501,000.

Three Halerzy: Lilac. (Scott's #62). Varieties: Stamp #2 on sheet. Neck enlarged left side. White spot top and bottom H, cutting frame. Total issued 460,850.

Five Halerzy: Green and Emerald Green. (Scott's #63). Varieties: Top left leg touches bottom left breast. Bottom frame line broken, Stamp #1. Broken C stamp #48. Total issue 890,050.

Six Halerzy: Orange and Reddish

Orange. (Scott's #64). Variety: Left side wing touches top right breast. Total issued 100,444.

Ten Halerzy: Lake and Carmine Lake. (Scott's #65). Variety: Ornament left of shield broken at top. Total issued 1,004,250.

Fifteen Halerzy: Light Brown and Dark Brown. (Scott's #66). Varieties: Tail joins with upper part left claw. Stamp #100, ornament butts and touches bottom right side shield. Total issued 1,504,846.

Twenty Halerzy: Olive and Olive Green. (Scott's #67). Variety: Tongue

missing. Total issued 602,650.

Twenty-five Halerzy: Carmine and Rose Carmine. (Scott's #68). Variety: Broken C #68th stamp. Total issued 3,008,550.

Fifty Halerzy: Slate Blue and Indigo. (Scott's #69). Variety: Tongue resembles a Pipe. Total issued 806,650.

Seventy Halerzy: Light Blue; Blue and Deep Blue (Scott's #70). Variety: Stamp #33 broken numeral 7. Total issued 501,150.

ONE KRONEN: Bicolored stamp. (Scott's #71). Gray and Carmine; Olive Gray and Rose Carmine. Varieties: White spot at foot R spells KOCONA. Broken letter P. Shield Shifted to the right side. Shield shifted downward. Total issued 408,400.

Proofs are supposed to exist. I have a complete set all printed in black on thick gray wove paper, evidently trial printings.

These stamps were placed on sale at various times during the early part of March, 1919, as soon as released by the printer and ready for distribution to the various Post Offices. Monday, March 3rd, 1919, the 15 and 25 halery appeared, then the 10, 20 and 25 halery on Wednesday, the 5th of March, the 2, 5, and 70 halery, Friday the 7th of March on the 10th of March the 3 halery and the one kronen and the last of the series the 6 halery on the 13th of March, 1919. These stamps were on sale at all the main Post Offices for a period of twenty days, and by Decree #11584 of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraph at Warsaw thus withdrawn from sale, yet good for postage for six months thereafter.

Conditions in Poland at the time were not the best and the monetary system also was in a confused and chaotic state. The postal rates varied and became complex because of the difference of values on the money exchange market between the fennig and mark currency of Northern Poland and that of the halery and kronen monies of the Southern parts of Poland. This caused great discrepancies and a great need for the use of postage due stamps, for collection of the shortage due on letters from various parts of Northern Poland soon became apparent.

In February of 1921, five values of the remainders of the P. KL. series at Warsaw were overprinted by the Postal authorities with the surcharge doplata with values of 6, 20, and 35

MK (mark) in black, as additional postage due stamps as follows:

6MK on the 15 halery surcharged 270,000.

6MK on the 25 halery surcharged 160,000.

20 MK on the 10 halery surcharged 42,000.

20 MK on the 50 halery surcharged 60,000.

35 MK on the 70 halery surcharged 26,000.

Covers indeed are choice items for collections. Taking into consideration the brief period that these stamps were used, not many covers exist. Many collectors have paid very little attention to specializing in this issue in the past and today many seek for the different varieties that are not to be found. I have seen and possess forged and counterfeit copies of these stamps which are very crude in comparison with the originals.

POLPEX 1945

Plans for POLPEX 1945 are shaping up very nicely, Dr. M. E. Uznanski, POLPEX Director announces. The Polish Roman Catholic Union Archives and Museum will again house the exhibition. Here, among the jewels of Poland's glorious past, amid a dramatic setting steeped in Poland's history, will be related her Philatelic story, from Poland No. 1 to the very latest Monte Cassino issue. In other words everything philatelic from 1865 to 1944! Everyone recalls the tremendous success of our last POLPEX held in this same setting. Dr. Uznanski is out to make this POLPEX a bigger and better POLPEX than ever held before.

February 22, 23, 24, and 25, 1945 are the dates.

Plan now to exhibit!

Plan now to attend!

POLONUS AUCTION

The Polonus Auction in conjunction with POLPEX 1945 will be held February 24, 1945, at the P. R. C. U. Archives and Museum. Roman Wojcicki has been appointed Auction manager for this occasion.

This is a members auction, with all of the lots the property of members of the society. The bidding is by all interested in the stamps of Poland. Now is a good time to sell any surplus material or accumulations. If you have

any material for sale sent it in to Roman Wojcicki, Auction Manager.

Commission on sales will be 15 per cent. A minimum of 15 cents per lot will be charged in those cases where the sales does not exceed \$1.00.

Lots should be in the hands of the Auction Manager not later than January 12, 1945, for listing in the January issue of the Bulletin. Send your lots to Roman Wojcicki, 1810 West 17th Street, Chicago 8, Illinois.

THIS 'n THAT

The second meeting in the month of December will be held Dec. 29th instead of Dec. 22nd, because of the Christmas holidays.

Dr. M. E. Uznanski won the first Award in the Specialty Class at the Mound City Stamp Exhibition, held in St. Louis on October 27 to 29, 1944. Congratulations, Doc.

STAMPS Magazine for February 24, 1945, will be a special Polish issue, in honor of POLPEX 1945. President, Myron Steczynski will edit all of the material.

"I received the BULLETIN and Souvenir Sheet. Thanks for thinking of us out here where the going is tough. We could use some stamp magazines out here. We are still re-reading the magazines that were sent to me at Camp Grant." 1st Lt. S. F. Galaskiewicz (Somewhere in France).

David Lidman, Stamp Editor of the Chicago Sun, and Dr. Leon P. Koza-kiewicz gave informational and inspiring talks on STAMPS for the WOUNDED, at the meeting on November 10, 1944. The members contributed rather generously of magazines, stamps, hinges, albums, etc., at this meeting to Stamps for the Wounded.

The Donation Auction to pay the balance of the Society's Life Membership fee in the Polish Roman Catholic Union Archives and Museum realized the sum of \$37.90. At the last meeting a motion was made, seconded and passed that the balance of \$50.00 be paid forthwith.

"I've been receiving the BULLETIN regularly. Truthfully speaking, I always look forward to it in the mails.

After all, it's my only regular contact with Polonus and its activities. Best of success and luck to all of the members." Stanley Madro, USN (Somewhere in the Pacific)

Nomination of officers for the next term will be held on January 12, 1945. This is a very important meeting. Nominations are terribly important, be sure to be there!

"I managed to spend 4 hours in Paris. Best regards to you and all of the members. Also wishing you success in every POLPEX and anxiously awaiting the "Victory Beeba" when all of us come back home." Walter Lewinski, M/Sgt. (Somewhere in France)

Pvt. Stanley Kucharz, now stationed at Camp Ellis, Illinois, was a welcome visitor at the last meeting.

Her eis the program for the balance of the year:

December 8, 1944, Dr. M. E. Uznanski will talk on Christmas Seals. Juniors Party.

December 29, 1944, regular meeting. January 12, 1945, Dr. Nicholas Kalinowski will discuss Polish History on Stamps. Nomination of Officers!

January 26, 1945, regular meeting and election of officers.

February 9, 1945, final preparations for POLPEX 1945 and installation of officers for coming year.

The Library of the Society has been increased by the addition of the Vol. II, of the 1945 Catalogue issued by Scott Publications, Inc. This volume was sent to the society by Hugh M. Clark, with his compliments and is imprinted with the word "POLONUS" on the front cover.

Polonus is taking an active part in the Chicago Regional organization of Stamps for the Wounded, headed by David Lidman, Stamp Editor of the Chicago Sun.

Stamps for the Wounded. Give what you can! Hinges, old magazines, old albums, tongs, stamps, on paper, off paper, entires, covers, anything philatelic. Only GIVE! Give to the wounded — to make shorter their stay in the hospitals. A more worthier cause a stamp collector will never find.